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CONTENTS.

Reflections for April, 121
Essay on Infidelity, No. 2, 123
On Episcopacy, continued from P. 99, 130
Castellio's Translation of the Bible, 134
St. Cyprian to Donatus, on the grace of God, to be continued, 135
John Calvin, on Grace and Perseverance, 137
Exposition of the Articles of the Church, 140
Tertullian's Apology, 145
Advice to a Student, continued from P. 102, 148
Advantages of a Liturgy, 150
A Fragment, continued, 151
Lines to a Friend, 154
Original Documents, 154
Select Thoughts, 160

THAT WHICH IS OF GOD BE BEFORE TO THE SUPREMACY OF THAT WHICH BE HATH GIVEN: THAT WHICH IS CORRUPTION, LET IT WITHER EVEN IN THE ROOT FROM WHENCE IT HATH SPRUNG.—Brooks.

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REFLECTIONS FOR APRIL.

FOR man's transgression the earth was cursed, and made to bring forth thorns, and briars, and noxious weeds; so that without continual labour and toil, it will yield no fruits for our comfortable subsistence; but man is doomed to *eat his bread in the sweat of his face*. The hardened soil must be turned, moulded, and softened, to drink in the dews and gentle showers of heaven, or it will produce nothing but its native barren trash. Just was the sentence, most righteous the decree, which compels us thus to till the ground from whence we are taken. Most wise were the councils of heaven to inflict this punishment, for it continually reminds us of an important truth, which should ever be kept in view; that our hearts are no less hardened and rendered barren of any thing good; that they equally, nay rather much more, need cultivation, or they will yield no fruit unto holiness. True it is, we are said to be God's husbandry; our hearts are the field in which he sows the seeds of divine grace: But at the same time we have something to do in cultivating this field: We must use our exertions in plucking up the thorns and briars, with which it is apt to be overrun, and in softening the barren sod. He who is the owner of the field hath assigned this for our task, while himself assists, and liberal scatters around the good seed.

Art thou, then, an husbandman? Is it thy daily business and occupation, at this passing season, to turn the soil, that it may receive the warming influences of the sun, and to throw into it the seed, in hopes of a plentiful crop, when the heat of summer shall have brought it to maturity? If so, from thy occupation learn a lesson of spiritual wisdom. Are thy pursuits of a different nature? Art thou confined to the workshop or counting-house; or to the higher walks of business or study? Be it so; yet still thou canst find time, in imagination at least, to walk abroad, and survey the innocent, the useful, and instructive labours of the field: Thou canst behold it, otherwise barren, streaked in furrows, receiving the falling showers, intermixed with bright sunshine, which soon shall cause the seed to shoot, and clothe in green the face of the earth. On this survey, look into thine own heart, and call to mind that he, whose husbandry we are, in like manner is sowing the seeds of his grace in our hearts; where, if they are duly cultivated, will grow up a crop of virtue and holiness. To this kind of instruction thou art invited by him who came into the

world to teach man divine knowledge. He ever delighted to clothe his precepts and doctrines, in a garb drawn from the scenery of nature around him, or from the simple occupations of life; particularly those of the husbandman were his favourite theme. And what could be more proper? For even in Paradise, when man was innocent, one species of husbandry was his employment; he was to *dress and till the garden.* And after he had been condemned to toil in the field, in order to overcome the barrenness of the earth, it was surely becoming the divine wisdom, to shew him how he might draw instruction from his punishment. Hear then the words of that divine teacher who spake nothing in vain. *Behold a sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side; and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and choked them: But others fell on good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty.* How simple, and yet how animated and instructive this narrative! How worthy of him who *spake as never man spake!* Who *taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes!* Who needed not the pomp of diction, for his subjects were weighty, and proper to command attention from his hearers.

Listen then to the instruction, which God's word, united with the passing season, is presenting for your contemplation. Are you among those by the way-side, into whose hearts the seed cannot enter by reason of their hardness? Are your affections unsusceptible of good impressions, from a view of God's mercy and loving kindness? Is his word, when you hear it, snatched immediately away from your mind, and devoured by your evil propensities to sin and unholiness, those unclean birds which prey upon every thing good? Has your heart never been opened and mellowed, neither by misfortunes and sorrows, of which no doubt you have had your share; nor by the sunshine of prosperity, which God hath poured upon you from his bounty? If afflictions cannot break up the hardness of your heart; nor blessings descending from the hand of God, as the dew or rain of heaven, soften its obduracy; you will be unfruitful: In vain will you hear his word; in vain will you seek instruction from the operations of his hand. The influences of his grace will not enter there. The soil is uncultivated, unprepared, and it is idle to look for a crop. The husbandman does not expect his seed to grow in the common highway, where it must remain uncovered, if not carried away by the fowls of the air; or if it gets root, must be trodden down by every passenger. In things of this sort pertaining to the present life; men do not ordinarily want wisdom; yet they are apt absurdly to expect a quite contrary result in the husbandry of their hearts, and that they will bring forth fruit unto God, though never cultivated; though left open to the inroads of every sin, and exposed to every temptation that comes along; though trodden down and hardened by every evil lust incident to corrupt human nature. Rouse up, then, your slumbering attention, and learn wisdom from every cultivated field which

you behold. If your occupation be labouring upon the soil, let your mind as well as your body be employed in such manner, that a plentiful harvest may spring from your labours. If you are enjoying competence and ease, disdain not the wisdom so cheaply bought; the wisdom addressed to the heart from every furrow that the husbandman draws, and dropping into the understanding from every handful of grain he throws upon the earth.

But I will charitably hope you are not one of those by the wayside. What then? Are you not among those characterized by the stony ground, into which the seed cannot enter deep enough to produce any fruit? It becomes you seriously to consider, whether you are not a mere formal Christian, without the spirit and power of the gospel, dwelling in your heart, and bringing forth the fruits of holiness and peace: For many such there are who hear the word of God gladly, and for the time believe what they hear; but who have no deepness in themselves; no realizing sense of their own great demerits as fallen creatures; no proper faith in the all-atoning sacrifice of a Saviour; and no well grounded resolutions, that they will serve God with their whole heart. Such may now and then feebly resolve, that they will make a serious business of their religion; but such half formed intentions are blasted and withered, by the first temptation that assaults their hearts. The seed may spring and grow up for a little time; but soon the burning heat of anger, on some trifling provocation, will scorch its growth: The fervour of lust and desire after some trifling vanity of time, the gratification of some bodily sense, will drain away its nourishment, and leave it a withered, fruitless shoot. Are you then one of those who are thus heedlessly floating down the current of life, which will soon waft you into the boundless ocean of eternity, thinking it enough that you, in form, profess to know and believe the truth? Look and see yourself depicted in the disappointed labours of the husbandman. Cast your mind forward to the coming season of harvest; and behold yonder spot, in the midst of the luxuriant field: But half grown, black, and fruitless stand the withered straws. The stony soil beneath, with the sun's burning heat, has deprived them of moisture, and they have come to naught. Just such are you, in the field of the great husbandman; just so unfruitful will you be found, when the harvest of the great day shall come, except you receive instruction, remove the stony hardness from your heart, and cultivate it deep, that the love of God and man, and a sense of all divine things may take strong root, grow up, and influence the whole tenor of your life and actions.

Mark again the diligent husbandman; how he clears the ground before he puts in the seed; how he roots up the thorns and briars and every noxious plant; well knowing that otherwise he shall reap no harvest. You yourself perhaps are exercised in this very business, and yet neglect to learn any wisdom from your occupation. You do not consider that the cultivation of your heart needs the same care, or rather much greater, if you intend it shall produce any good fruit. You think not that it is a much ranker soil, than that which you till with your hands; much more apt to bring forth poisonous and destructive weeds. These you clear not away, but suffer them to grow

in full luxuriance; how then can you expect a harvest? You toil from day to day in subduing the wildness of mother earth, but take no thought how much need there is of subduing yourself. In your solitary walks, and when on your pillow, the cares and business of life occupy your whole mind; and the lessons of wisdom, which you should be learning from your employment, are crouded out of view. Or perhaps you are resolved to be rich and great, and so plunge eagerly into a round of business on a larger scale; you study by night, and act by day; you travel by land, and tempt the main; you ransack all the sources of wealth; you put in practice every art, every stratagem that promises success; you intrigue; you circumvent; you strive to vie with this one, and outstrip the other; you count your treasures; you reckon your gains; you triumph at your successes, and sicken at your disappointments; your ship returns richly laden; your heart beats high with joy; or you hear she is swallowed up in the ocean; down sink your spirits; and despair shivers through your veins. Again you venture, and seek to repair your losses; fear and anxiety prey upon your mind, and render you inattentive to every thing but your beloved hoards. Does your heart fail you, when you contemplate these alternate changes from joy to sorrow, and from sorrow to joy, that ever must attend an ardent pursuit of business or ambition? Then perhaps you will enter on what you deem a wiser course of life: So on you drive from pleasure to pleasure; constantly pursuing what as constantly flies your pursuit. Foiled and disappointed in one track, you turn about, and fix your attention on some new object. But still the phantom flies; or if you are able to overtake it, you find you are embracing but a shadow; it eludes your grasp, and instantly vanishes from your sight. This you call a life of pleasure and happiness. O folly! O wondrous stupidity! Amid all this turmoil of business or pleasure, what care have you taken, what care could you take of your heart? What cultivation has it received? None at all; it is all overgrown with brambles and thorns. No one virtue can shoot up there, but it is immediately overtopped by ambition, love of gain, or lust of pleasure; it is choked and rendered altogether unfruitful by some poisonous plant or another, that is left to shoot in full vigour from the native rank soil of fallen man. Where virtue cannot grow, peace and happiness will not dwell. Those heaven-descended guests will not associate with the heart that is perpetually absorbed in riches, ambition or pleasure: They fly the haunts of these unclean passions, to dwell only with the humble, the meek, and the virtuous.

Go forth then, and learn wisdom, purity, virtue, and peace from the cultivator's hand. Clear away the exorbitant desires of thy heart, and fit it to receive the good seed which God promises to sow. Let it enter deep into thy affections, and take root in thy soul. With continual cultivation encourage its growth. Weed away, as fast as they shoot up, every hurtful plant. Be a diligent, a wise, and prudent husbandman over thyself. Keep that little field, thy heart, well enclosed and secure from the encroachments and depredations of every disorderly passion; and it will bring forth a plentiful harvest of good things, rewarding an hundred fold and more, thy care

and diligence. God, by his grace, will water, as with the dew of heaven, the seed of his own planting, and bring it to maturity in its proper time. Wait therefore on him, after using thine own diligence, in devout and humble confidence; that he may cause *to come down the former and latter rain* upon the fruits of the earth; and by his spirit, quicken in you the growth of every virtue.

FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

ESSAY ON INFIDELITY....No. III.

IN my last essay, the utility of the Christian Sabbath was considered. How much that institution contributes to civilization, and to extend the blessings of social life, was largely shewn. This is a point to which the advocates of revelation do not seem to have sufficiently adverted: and infidels have been rather cautious of bringing it into view; knowing as we may well suppose, that they should gain nothing by assailing this part of the Christian fortress. Even *Paine*, who must be viewed as one of the boldest of this sort of men, so far as I recollect (and I make the observation from memory only, not having the book at hand) has ventured very little further than to hint a doubt of the utility of such an institution. It would therefore perhaps be unfair and uncandid, to say they wish to see it quite abolished. Abstractly considered, it is probable the wisest of them do not. At the same time they may well be asked, whether they think it would long continue to be observed, should they succeed in destroying all faith in its divine appointment? Have we not abundant reason to fear, that the avarice of some, and the indolence of others would soon bring it into utter disuse? The efficacy of human laws, should they be continued, would avail but little. Take away the belief that it is God's institution; the foundation would be removed, and inevitable destruction would follow. Yet infidels are perpetually labouring by their writings, and in their discourses, to remove this foundation. With regard to many of them at least, we may charitably hope they do it without considering the magnitude of the mischiefs they may do: without once thinking, if they should be generally successful, how certainly they would rend in pieces the best, most useful and stable institutions of civil society. They have seized upon the corruptions which have been engrafted upon genuine Christianity, by the folly or wickedness of its professors: These they have magnified, distorted, and caricatured; until they have produced in their imaginations, a hideous monster, which deserves to be scouted from the earth. On these evils, which they represent as resulting from a pretended revelation, they have ruminated until their own understandings are actually bewildered, so that they do not see the benefit they are reaping from what they so much labour to decry. On these evils, they have descanted, and expended their wit and their satire, until they have shaken or quite overturned the faith of many, who from their avocations and circumstances, are indifferently qualified to investigate subjects of this sort, or duly to appreciate arguments somewhat complicated; and who therefore, are under the ne-

cessity of following a guide. This being the case with them, have we not abundant reason to think they will rather follow such a one as flatters their passions, gratifies their indolence, and inspires them with hopes of impunity in whatever vices they may choose to indulge. He who will not admit this consequence, must be either little versed in human nature, or himself very perverse and viciously inclined. We wish for nothing but fair and candid treatment: Let the good which Christianity has done and is doing to the world, be put into one scale, and its enemies have full liberty to place in the other, all the evils they can find or surmise, that have risen from its corruptions, and the misdirection of its principles by wicked men. Let them meet us fairly on this ground alone, and we need not fear the result.

I again wish it to be well remembered, that I enter into no discussion of the arguments for, or against the divine authority of the Scriptures, and their consequent obligation on reasonable creatures. I take the Christian system as it has been, and is professed in the world, and found all I have to say on what must be admitted to be matter of fact. *Bishop Horne* in his *Letters to Infidels*, informs us that it is his design to *carry the war into the enemy's country*, and to attack them on their own ground. In the spirit of the same allusion, it is mine to dispossess them of the *out-works* which they imagine they have secured, from whence successfully to annoy the *citadel*. If these are maintained, in vain will be *Hume*'s metaphysical dexterity; *Voltaire* may discharge to no purpose his sarcasms, or *Paine* his grosser scoffs. They must attack from a distance: Their weapons must drop short of their mark, or fly harmless over the garrison within.

Decidedly believing this to be the most eligible way of defending revelation against the attacks of its enemies, I proceed to examine the happy influence which Christianity has had in bettering the morals of men, and making them more observant of the duties which they owe to themselves and each other. Much vice and wickedness indeed, still prevail where the gospel is professed, and among those who pretend to believe in, and live by its precepts. But what then? The proper question to be settled is, are vice and impurity so flagrantly practised? are such vile abominations tolerated and approved, as were before the light of the gospel shown? No one who is acquainted with this subject, will dare pretend he can find room hardly for a comparison. Enormities, it is well known, were openly encouraged by the very best of the heathens, which decency hardly permits to be named. In the language of an Apostle however, hear them enumerated; *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men, working that which is unseemly.* * * * * *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.** Not that all these vices

* Rom. i. 26, 29, 30, 31.

were openly tolerated and practised without rebuke; but many of them were: and such as were deemed odious by the wiser and better sort, could not be restrained in any tolerable degree, by the authority of their precepts and example, or by the force of human laws. Among those directly encouraged was that vile abomination first mentioned by the Apostle. This, it is known, was very universally practised by the gravest of their philosophers, who professed to be instructors and patterns of morality. And who can read, but with indignation, the Roman poet, whose verses have so long delighted, and we may say instructed the learned in many useful things, where he celebrates his love of a beautiful boy. Horrible perversion of the human character! If it had not been generally esteemed innocent, such a testimony, with a great many others that might be cited, would not have come down to this late posterity, to be an everlasting stigma upon heathen morality, however excellent it may have been in other respects.

The philosophers indeed taught and inculcated a system, which in many points was pure and exalted; and what they taught, in some good degree they practised in their lives. But still it was most wretchedly defective, in a great many important particulars. Lewdness, debauchery and intemperance are very hardly treated as vices; but at most, no more than follies easily pardoned. And when we consider that the religion they professed, directly encouraged and required the practice of these vices, in the impure worship which they addressed to their fancied deities, the patrons of wine, and of lust; what could be the consequence but the most abandoned licentiousness? Revelling and drunkenness, with the gratification of every impure desire, were the rites with which those divinities were supposed to be well pleased: Consequently in the season when their festivals were kept, the temples were converted into brothels; they were filled with intoxication and disorder: Neither did the monstrous perversion end here, and remain concealed within the walls of a temple; for whole troops of naked *Bacchanalians*, as they were called, used to sally forth, and with all the extravagant actions of drunkenness, scour the town and the country. Now what instruction, what precept, what force of example, had there been any in the world, could resist so much temptation? But the worst part of the picture is yet to be presented: For the philosophers purposely confined their instruction to a chosen few; and never even attempted to enlighten and reform the vulgar; but left them to wallow in all the vices which their depraved hearts should prompt them to commit. Without instruction, without precept, without the motive of honour and ambition to gain and preserve a fair reputation, and with but faint hopes or fears of any good or evil, except from present things; perhaps a great part of them, altogether without any motive drawn from the consideration of a future life; what could they consider as their greatest good, but the gratification of their animal desires? What of course must have been their characters, but a compound of vice, ferocity, and brutality? We need neither human nor divine history to inform us that this must have been the case. When we see so much vice prevalent among men, with all the advantages and glorious mo-

tives of the gospel before them, what must they have been without those advantages? The question does not need to be answered: Every one must immediately answer for himself.

That the common people were thus neglected, take the following proof among hundreds that might be adduced, from one of the gravest and best of their writers on morality.* *I would have you bear in mind*, says he, *that to the vulgar, every thing is permissible, (for this license results from the very circumstances in which they are born and brought up) but to the better sort, the neglect of virtue is unpardonable.* This singular concession in favour of vice is addressed to a young man, whom the writer is endeavouring to impress with sentiments of wisdom and virtue; and it goes to prove, that they not only neglected and despised the great body of the community, but unduly fostered the pride of those whom they deigned to instruct. The whole tendency of such partiality was to exalt the one class, and depress the other; to produce, consequently, insolence on one side, and abject meanness on the other. But had it been otherwise—had they endeavoured to instruct and reform all alike, yet what authority had they to enforce their precepts? By what sufficient motive could they urge obedience? They could not do it by the powerful considerations of future happiness or misery; for after all the fine things they have said concerning the soul's immortality (and they have said every thing that unassisted reason could say, and perhaps in the best manner too) still they appear very hardly to have believed in the doctrine, which they professed to teach. Their faith was, at the best, wavering and unsteady. They seem to have been aware, that with such lights as they had, this was an insecure ground upon which to rest their exhortations; and therefore had recourse to honour, ambition, and love of fame. They were very solicitous to remind their pupils of immortality on earth, a great name to descend to posterity, as a motive to virtuous actions; but said little to them of their condition after death. But what efficacy could such motives have upon those to whom they were offered, against unbridled appetites and passions? On some of the best inclined they doubtless did operate, to a considerable degree; though not enough to produce that undeviating virtue, and those sober manners, which constitute the character of a rational being. Even of these philosophers themselves, we find recorded many instances of gross immorality. How small then must have been the effect of their instruction, upon the generality of those whom they taught? There must have been few who did not give a loose to their desires when assaulted by temptations. They talked well in the closet, or in the school of philosophy; but in the world they acted the reverse. And the black catalogue of vices enumerated by the Apostle, were openly committed to a far greater extent than can be pretended, where Christanity is professed. Do modern unbelievers wish to reduce the world to the same state? I hope not. I believe not. No; they labour for they know not what; to gratify a pride of singularity; or to serve some other particular interest of their own; or by dwelling only on the dark side of things, and ascribing to Christianity the evils which have resulted from the wicked-

* Isocrates.

ness of its professors, they have heated their imaginations, and bewildered their understandings so as not to make a fair estimate of the subject. None of them would willingly be thought the advocates of vice and immorality; yet it is no new assertion to say, that they may be so in fact, by seeking to lessen or destroy the influence of that religion, which contributes so much to the improvement of manners; which bars the way against licentiousness, and controuls the corrupt passions of men.

That such has been and is the effect of Christianity, notwithstanding the numerous vices that poison the peace of social life, I now proceed to shew. And what is become of those enormities, those flagrantly licentious practices which have been enumerated? If they are not altogether banished from the earth, they are at least driven to hide themselves in obscurity. They are rendered so odious that few have the hardihood to venture upon them openly. Sobriety, temperance and chastity are exalted into virtues of the first rank, which, at the utmost, used to be placed among those of a lower order. Humility and meekness have taken place of their opposites, pride and ambition. Kindness and charity to the needy, which were scarcely so much as named among heathens, stand conspicuously forward on the list among Christians. And here it may be worth while just to notice, that all those noble institutions which do so much honour to the human heart, which display the godlike virtue of doing good; such as hospitals and places of retreat for the necessitous, supported by the liberality of such as have the means and the disposition, owe their origin altogether to the spirit of Christianity. They were absolutely unknown in the world before the light of the gospel shown. This is a fact, with which perhaps many are unacquainted, and ought therefore to be informed of its truth. Of the beginning of these charitable institutions, we have very early and authentic notices, even in the word of God; for we read that *the disciples every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.** But as I intend to handle this point more largely in some future essay, for the present I shall thus lightly pass it over, and go on to some considerations of a more general nature.

No sooner had the gospel spread itself over the Roman empire, than its professors were noticed to be more sober and regular in their manners, and more kind and benevolent in their dispositions, than their heathen neighbours. This their enemies were obliged to confess; for it was a common saying amongst them, *See how these Christians love each other.* The favourable testimony of an enemy is always to be taken for true; we cannot therefore doubt but there was something very remarkable in their conduct. And what wonder it should be so, when we consider the spirit and tendency of the religion they professed, and that what they professed they felt, and what they felt, they acted. And would to God, the same might be said, with truth, of us their successors; for blessed and happy would be the fruits of such a conformity between our words, and our actions; we should not so often, as we now do, give

* Acts xi. 29, 30.

infidels a handle to condemn our profession. But the most remarkable testimony to the point we are upon, is that of PLINY, a learned and judicious man, and a Pagan; who being governor of one of the Roman provinces in a time of persecution, wrote to the Emperor a sort of remonstrance which is still extant; and in which he feelingly pleads the cause of Christians. He tells him (I pretend not to give his words, not having the book before me) "that his armies are full of them; that many are in the magistracy; that they are faithful, upright and obedient subjects; and ought not to be molested on account of their religion. And there is no one, in the least acquainted with the early Christian writers, but knows that they not only opposed the debasing superstitions of their heathen neighbours, but strictly abstained from, and severely inveighed against the horrible vices that prevailed: And that to avoid every appearance of evil, they would not be seen in the company of the profligate—To avoid temptation, they avoided scenes of amusement, where vice might be recommended. That we their successors have sadly degenerated from this strictness of manners is not to be disputed. Since Christianity has become the fashionable religion, there are many, too many, nominal professors, who have none of the spirit and power of what they profess; and consequently shew none of it in their conduct. But still it may be maintained, that neither these, nor others who make no profession, go to that flagrant enormity in vice, which prevailed in the pagan world. Either the force of example, the fear of shame and reproach, or some sparks of what they profess or see professed, keeps hold of their hearts, and restrains their conduct. Hence we are every day reaping important benefits from the Christian religion; greater degrees of temporal peace and happiness; which should make us cautious, had we no other reasons, (which God be thanked we have) of listening to those who would gladly destroy its influence. H.

FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

ON EPISCOPACY.

[Continued from page 99.]

HAVING proceeded thus far in *reasoning out of the scriptures* upon the Episcopal form of Church government, it is perhaps unnecessary to pursue it any farther. I cannot, however, willingly dismiss the subject, without appealing to Christian writers, who lived immediately after the Apostles, to find whether my *reasonings* and *conclusions* are warranted by them.

And first may be noticed a passage from the writings of St. Clement, whom St. Paul, in his epistle to the Thessalonians, calls his *fellow labourer, whose name is in the book of life;* and who, as ecclesiastical history informs us, was afterwards ordained a Bishop by St. Peter. This Clement, in an epistle he wrote to the Corinthians, says of the *Jewish Church*—"To the *High Priest* his proper offices were "appointed, the *Priests* had their proper order; and the *Levites* "their peculiar services, or deaconships; and the *Laymen* what was

"proper for Laymen." This he applies to the *Christian Church*, and to its offices of *Bishop*, *Priest*, and *Deacon*, in order to show how exactly it harmonized with that of the Jews. And when it is considered that he lived in the very time of the Apostles, and was acquainted with several of them, his testimony must appear to be of great weight.

But again:—*St. Ignatius*, who suffered martyrdom but four or five years after the death of St. John, gives us a greater variety of testimony upon this subject. Ecclesiastical writers say he was consecrated *Bishop* by the hands of *St. Peter*, and presided over the Church at Antioch forty years or more; of course he must have been well acquainted with the Apostles, and with the government of the Church in their days. Let us then hear what he says upon this subject. In writing to the *Trallians*, he observes—"Do nothing "without the *Bishop*; be subject to the college of *Presbyters*;—"and let the *Deacons*, who are the mystery of Jesus Christ, by "all means please all men; for they are not only Deacons of "meats and drinks, but ministers of the Church of God. In like "manner, let all of you reverence the *Deacons*, the *Bishop* and the "*Presbyters*; without these a Church is not named." Again—"He is an alien, or out of the Church, who does any thing without "the *Bishop*, and *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*." In writing to another Church, he exhorts "the *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, and *Laymen*, to "do nothing separate from the Bishop," or without acknowledging his authority. To the same Church he says, "I exhort you to do "all things according to the mind or will of God, the *Bishop* presi-"ding, and the *Presbyters* in room of the Apostles, and the *Deacons* "entrusted with the ministry of Christ." He also wrote to the Church at Philadelphia, which is mentioned in the book of Revelations, and directed his epistle to "those who were in unity with the "*Bishop*, and *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*." And this shows that there were three orders of ministers in that Church, and that he did not consider any as *Christians*, but those who acknowledged their authority, and adhered to their ministry. In that epistle he says, that, "as many as are with Christ, the same are with the *Bishop*:" and as some had revolted from their *Bishop*, he tells them, that "those "who repent, and return to the unity of the Church, shall be accept-"ed of God, and live according to Jesus Christ." This implies, that those who did not adhere to the *Bishop*, or to the Church which was governed by Bishops, did not follow Christ, and were not entitled to his promises. And in this way he continues his exhortation: "My "brethren, be not deceived; if any man shall follow him that makes "a schism or separation in the Church, he shall not inherit the king-"dom of God."

Whether his opinion in this case was perfectly right or not, in thus cutting off from salvation all who did not adhere to their Bishop, is a point not now under enquiry. Let that be as it may, it clearly proves what he understood and knew to be the constitution of the Church; that it had three orders of ministers, two of them in subordination to the Bishop; and this is what now we undertake to prove.

He proceeds further in the same strain, recommending to the people unity and submission to their Bishop, and his inferior Clergy. "Endeavour (says he) to partake of the *one* Eucharist or Sacrament; "for there is *one* flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *one* cup in the un- "ion of his blood, and *one* altar; so there is *one Bishop*, with his *Pres-* "*byters*, and the *Deacons* my fellow servants, that whatever ye do, ye "may do according to God." Again—"Give heed to the *Bishop*, "and to the *Presbyters*, and to the *Deacons:* Without or separate "from the Bishop, do nothing;" which relates to the Church. This venerable minister of Christ also wrote to the Church of Smyrna, which is mentioned in the Revelations; and this letter was written but a short time after St. John's death. He says to the people— "Flee divisions as the beginning of evils: All of you follow the "*Bishop*, as Jesus Christ the Father; and the *Presbyters* as the Apos- "tles; and reverence the *Deacons* as the institution of God. Let no "one do any thing of what appertains to the Church without the "Bishop," or without having respect to his authority. "Let that "sacrament be judged effectual and firm which is dispensed by the "*Bishop*, or by him to whom the Bishop has committed it." He concludes this epistle to the Smyrnians thus:—"I salute your most "worthy *Bishop*, your venerable *Presbyters*, and the *Deacons*, my "fellow servants." He also wrote another epistle to the same place, in which he thus exhorts the people:—"Give heed to your *Bishop*, "that God may hearken unto you."

He then addresses the *Bishop* of *Smyrna*, who was a disciple of St. John, and afterwards died a martyr of Christ—"Let nothing be done without thy judgment and approbation." Here then are five epistles, written to four different Churches, all of which he mentions as having three orders of Ministers; and he exhorts the people in the strongest manner to adhere to this Episcopal form of government, because those who separated from the Church of Christ, would of course be separate from Christ himself. And if it is considered that this *Ignatius* was a scholar of *St. John*, was ordained by *St. Peter*, and was acquainted with several of the Apostles for more than thirty years, it must be acknowledged that he knew what orders of ministers the Apostles appointed; and they being inspired and likewise acquainted with their Master, must have known what was agreeable to his will. Consequently it ought to be acknowledged, that the Episcopal form of Church government, consisting of three orders, was of divine appointment, like that among the Jews.

But again: *St. Ireneus*, Bishop of Lyons, who was instructed by *Polycarp*, the disciple of St. John, and who lived within fifty years from the time of St. John's death, says thus:—"We can reckon "those whom the Apostles appointed *Bishops* in the Churches, and "who they were that succeeded them, down to our own times." This shows that the Apostolic authority in the various Churches was considered as descending in the line of Bishops, and that it had descended regularly to his time.

Clement, of Alexandria, also, who was called the most learned man of that age, lived about the same time. In a sort of *Catechism* which he wrote, after he had selected some texts of scripture, which

set forth the duties of Christians in general, he says, "There are "many other precepts which concern men in particular stations— "some which relate to *Presbyters*—others to *Bishops*—and others "to *Deacons*." He also informs us in other parts of his writings, that *St. John*, after his return from Patmos, went about the country near Ephesus, and in some places ordained *Bishops*, and in others *Clergymen*, by direction of the spirit. And again, he speaks expressly of *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*; and says he thinks they resemble the orders and degrees of angels.

Tertullian, about twenty years later, says, "That the power of "baptizing is lodged in the *Bishop*; and that it may be exercised "by *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, but not without the Bishop's com- "mission."

About the year 200 of the *Christian æra*, or a hundred years from the death of St. John, flourished the great *Origen*, who was scholar to Clement, of Alexandria, and was probably the most learned man in the Primitive Church. He gives decided testimony upon this subject. He teaches, "that besides duties common to all Christians, "there is a duty peculiar to *Deacons*, another to *Presbyters*, and ano- "ther to *Bishops*, which is the greatest of all, and required by the "Saviour, who will severely punish the neglect of it." So that he plainly makes *Bishops* superior to *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, by the appointment of Christ. He also distinguishes the three orders by name, in several other passages, which could be mentioned.

St. Cyprian, who was twenty years later, declares, "That *Valeri- "an*, the Roman Emperor, wrote to the Senate, that the *Bishops*, and "*Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, should be prosecuted." He also says, many other things to the same purpose; among the rest, he affirms, "that *Bishops* are descended by succession from the Apostles:" and he severely blames the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, for intruding upon the Episcopal authority. And to show that this order of Church government continued in the succeeding ages, we find that *Optatus*, about the year 365, says, "The Church has her several members, "*Bishops*, *Presbyters*, *Deacons*, and the company of the faithful." And again, in addressing a heretic, who despised the orders of the Ministry—"You found in the Church, *Deacons*, *Presbyters*, and "*Bishops:* You have made them *Laymen*, and thus have subverted "souls."

And finally: *St. Jerome*, who wrote about the year 380, and who did not pretend to be any thing more than a *Presbyter*, declares, "That the Bishops are the successors of the Apostles, and that they "hold the Apostles' place or office." And likewise, in another place, "We may know the Apostolical economy to be taken from the Old "Testament; for the same that *Aaron* and his *Sons*, and the *Levites* "were in the Temple, the *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons* are, in "the Church of Christ."

But if quotations from the Ancient Fathers can be received in evidence upon this question, we have produced enough to decide it. Though, if necessary, we could mention hundreds more of the same kind, and to the same purpose. Indeed, so clear and forcible is the evidence of this kind—so constantly and invariably do the Primitive

Christians speak of three orders of ministers in the Church, and declare that none but *Bishops* have a right to ordain, that it appears almost impossible for any one who candidly examines their writings, any longer to doubt that Episcopacy was the original form of Church government. These writers have even given us the succession of Bishops in a number of Churches, from the Apostles downward, for three centuries, to the time of Constantine the Great; and from that time, for eleven centuries more, the Church throughout the world was Episcopal; and, even at the present moment, more than *nine tenths*, and it is believed more than *nineteen twentieths* of the professing Christians in the world, acknowledge the authority of *Bishops*, and adhere to the Episcopal mode of Church discipline. So that the people of this persuasion in America need not suspect themselves to be in the wrong, because they appear to be of the weaker sect; for they find a vast majority on their side; and though they are here called, as Moses called the Israelites, *the fewest of all people*, yet this Church shall never be forsaken; for Christ has promised to be with it, with that commission which he gave to the Apostles, and they to their successors, *always, even unto the end of the world.* Thus, however this Church may at any time be depressed by factions and divisions and unworthy members, it shall never be wholly abandoned: God will not *wholly take away his loving kindness from it, nor suffer his truth or promise to fail*, Psalm 39. 33. And, however that apostolical commission, which is given and perpetuated to the Bishops, may be despised, yet Christ himself will not forsake it: He will be *with it always*, and whatever affronts, neglects or indignities may be offered to those successors of the Apostles, he will always comfort them as he did his immediate disciples. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.*

A. B.

CASTELLIO'S TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

IT is the opinion of some, that the scriptures of the Old Testament give no intimations of a future state, and that the Jews looked for nothing beyond the grave. However erroneous may be this opinion, it is undoubtedly true that the doctrine of the resurrection and a future life, is less clearly unfolded in the Old, than in the New Testament; for we read that Jesus Christ *hath brought life and immortality to light in the gospel.* That is, by his own triumph over death, he hath purchased for men, and assured to them a resurrection to eternal life. At the same time it cannot reasonably be doubted but that the patriarcks and Jews, who understood the promises of a Saviour to come, believed in a future existence. Very clear intimations of which are to be found in many places of the Old Testament, as might be made to appear. While there are places in which it might seem natural to expect such intimations, and yet they are not to be found. Of this we have an instance in the 38th chap. of Isaiah; where is recorded king Hezekiah's prayer after he had been sick, and was assured, by the miracle of the shadow on the dial going backward, that he should have fifteen years added to his days. Here

we should naturally be led to expect some declaration of his faith, on that important point; and yet according to our common translation we find no single hint of any such faith. But according to Castellio's rendering of the 16th verse of this chapter, it is very clearly intimated; which in the English Bible runs thus: *O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these is the life of my spirit; so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.* Here is nothing of a future state. And besides there is a great want of perspicuity and connexion with what precedes and follows. Hezekiah has been speaking of his sorrows and the gloomy state of his mind in his sickness: and the same subject continues in the following verse. By *these things* men do not live, but rather die. It is also worthy of note that the word *things*, being in italics, has nothing equivalent in the original, which may lead us the more to suspect that the translators mistook the sense. But Castellio has thus rendered the verse; *O Lord, though my life be prolonged, shall the existence of my spirit be terminated with these few years? If thou causest me to sleep in death, wilt thou restore me to life?* This to be sure is no direct declaration of his faith in a future existence: It is only an intimation of his humble hope in the mercy of God, that after those few years, to which his life had been lengthened, should expire, his soul might continue to exist, and he be raised to a new life. In his then situation, humbled under a sense of his own weakness, blindness and ignorance, in comparison with the power and wisdom of God, it was natural for him to express his faith in this uncertain and doubting manner, as a thing he so little deserved, that it was rather to be wished for, than certainly believed; though at the same time he might have no doubt of its truth and certainty. Just of the same nature is a passage in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple; *but will God indeed dwell on the earth, whom the heaven of heaven's cannot contain?* Yet he had an express promise, that God would call that house the place of his residence. On the whole, Castellio's sense being most conformable to the occasion, and more intelligible in itself, we have reason to think it the better translation.

ST. CYPRIAN TO DONATUS, ON THE GRACE OF GOD.

WHEN I lay covered and overwhelmed with a midnight darkness, and floating uncertainly upon the waves of an unsanctified and secular life, knowing not where to fix my feet, nor how to order my steps, and utterly a stranger to the light and truth; under those dispositions of heart and mind, which then prevailed with me, I thought (I remember) very hardly of the gospel promises, and that the method of salvation propounded by it was utterly impracticable, since a man must be born again in order to obtain it, and must derive from the sacred laver of regeneration the principle of a new life; must put off the old man, and without any change of his bodily constitution, must be entirely renewed in the spirit of his mind. For how (thought I with myself) is so great an alteration possible or practicable? How shall I do to leave off on the sudden, and as it were upon the instant, radicated and habitual customs; which time and

continuance have made natural to me, and which are closely riveted to the very frame of my being? These things now have taken deep root, are settled and established in me. When is it ever known, that a man becomes a learner of frugality, who hath been much and long accustomed to sumptuous fare, and to live in luxury and riot. How rarely is it observed, that any man becomes contented with plain apparel and unornamented dress, who hath been used to sparkle in gold and jewels, and embroidered garments? The man of ambitious views, who pleases himself, and glories in the ensigns of authority and power, can never well submit to the inglorious case of a private life; he who hath been used to the officious attendances of a crowd of dependents, must think himself much a sufferer, when he is left alone. in like manner there is almost a necessity, that wine should engage; that pride should swell; that anger should inflame; that greediness of gain should make uneasy; that cruelty should provoke and prompt; that ambition should amuse and please, and that lust should hurry the man into rash and destructive measures, who hath long indulged any one of these several inclinations.

These, and such as these, were frequently my soliloquies; for as I was deeply entangled and ensnared in the errors of my former life, which I judged it impossible for me ever to disengage from; so I really seconded the evil propensities of my nature by my choice, added strength to them by indulgence, and despairing of any possible cure, I began to look upon them as parts of myself, and to favour them as my own proper attainments. But when the saving waters of baptism had purged away the filth of my former conversation, when the light of heavenly truth shone in upon me, and found my soul purified, and prepared thereby to receive and entertain it; when the spirit of God had descended upon me, and I was thence become a new creature, begotten again unto a lively hope; presently all my doubts were settled; all obscurities became plain to me; the light shone in after a wonderful manner upon my former darkness; things appeared easy to me, which before seemed hard: I was now convinced they were very possible to be done. I distinguished thenceforward that heavenly principle, which I had derived from the spirit of God; it had now entirely devoted and attached me to his service.

You are my witness, and will recollect with me from what fatal mischiefs that death unto sin hath delivered us, as well as what blessings that living unto righteousness hath conferred upon us. You, I say, know all this without my recital of it; nor need I therefore make any invidious excursions into my own praises; although it should rather indeed be interpreted as a mark of gratitude than of boasting, to mention those virtues, which are the gifts of God, and expressly ascribed to the glories of his grace; so that now if we cease from sin, it is agreed to be owing entirely to his favour, and to the faith which is in him; as before our faults were justly chargeable upon human depravity. From God alone, I say, we derive our powers; in him we live, by him we are enabled to will and to do, and even in our present state are encouraged to look beyond it, and to forebode to ourselves a further and future good. Only let a religious fear and caution preserve us blameless; that so the merciful Lord, who hath

thus favourably visited us with his holy illuminations, may take up his abode in our hearts, and delight to dwell with us as lovers of righteousness. For negligence and sloth will follow presumption and security; and then our old enemy will be sure to take his advantage when we are off our guard.

But if you keep close to the paths of innocence and virtue; if you do not suffer your footsteps to be shaken in them; if you rely upon God with all your heart, and all your might; let then your proceedings correspond with your happy beginnings, and you will find your powers of action will be always equal to the progress of your faith. For it is not in heavenly as in earthly benefactions; you are stinted to no measure nor boundary in receiving the gifts of God; the fountain of divine grace is ever flowing, is confined to no precise limitations, hath no determinate channel to restrain the waters of life: let us but in earnest thirst for them; and as much will flow in upon us as we are capable of holding, or as our faith enables us to receive. From thence, when we have qualified ourselves for the reception of it, by proper preparations of prayer, and all holy dispositions, we derive the power of expelling the deadly *poison* of sin, and of cleansing the stains contracted through the pollutions of it; of composing dissensions, and of making the violent and untractable tame and civilized.

Thus inasmuch as we have commenced Christians, and have received the spirit of God into our hearts, he exerts himself in us as he pleases: he worketh in us *to will and to do of his good pleasure*. Yet inasmuch as we still drag along with us these mortal bodies, somewhat there still will cleave to us of the secular life, and of its several imperfections. What accessions however are those of might and power, which are hence derived upon the inner man! Not only to be cleared from the pollutions which are in the world through lust; and to be secure against all the incursions of our ghostly enemy; but even to increase in strength; to be upon the offensive with him, to have at mercy, and under our subjection, the whole host and power of our grand adversary. *

[*To be continued.*]

JOHN CALVIN, ON GRACE AND PERSEVERANCE.

ON the other hand let us now enquire what is the remedy of divine grace, by which the corruption of nature is corrected and healed. For when it shall appear what is the work of God upon the heart, in affording us aid, and supplying what is wanting; it will at once also be seen, how great are our defects. When the Apostle to the Philipians says, he trust that *he who hath begun in them a good work, will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ*, no doubt by the beginning of the good work; he means the very first *conversion* of the will. God therefore begins the good work in us by exciting in our hearts a love, desire, and zeal for righteousness; or to speak more properly, by bending, forming, and directing our hearts to the truth: And this work he perfects by confirming us in perseverance. * By manifest and certain rea-

son it is clear, that the begining of holiness can come no where else, but from God; neither can there be in any a will, inclining them to holiness, but in the *Elect:* And the cause of *election* is to be sought for in something exterior to man; whence it follows that a right will flows not from man himself, but from the same good pleasure, by which we were elected before the creation of the world. To this we may add another like reason: For since the begining, both to will and to do what is good, is of faith, we must look and see whence faith is. Now the whole scriptures proclaim that it is the free gift of God; it therefore follows that when we, who by nature are in our whole dispositions prone to evil, begin to will what is good, it must be by mere grace. * With regard to perseverance, it is equally undoubted that it should be ascribed to the free gift of God, unless that worst of errors prevail, that it is dispensed to the merits of men, as each one shall be found grateful for what he first receives. But forasmuch as this error arises from its being supposed that we have power to reject, or receive the offered grace of God, this opinion being exploded, the other falls of course. There is however in this a double error; for it is held not only, that our grateful and proper use of the grace first dispensed is rewarded with what is afterwards given; but that grace is not the sole operator in us, being only a co-operator with ourselves.

With regard to the first of these points, we are thus to conceive of it, that God, while he daily enriches and endows his servants with new gifts of his grace, finds in them what should be followed by greater measures of his spirit, because the work which he hath begun in them is well-pleasing and acceptable to himself. To this effect are these words; *To him that hath shall be given.* Likewise; *Well done good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.* But here two cautions are necessary; that neither subsequent grace be considered as a reward for the right use of what was first given, as though man by his own power, could render the grace of God effectual; nor that in any sense it be reckoned a remuneration, so that the grace of God may cease to be grace. It must be admitted indeed, that by the faithful, this favour is to be expected from God; that the better they use the first motions of grace, the more they will afterwards be increased: But still I maintain that this use is from God; and this remuneration the effect of his good pleasure; and therefore that common distinction between operating and co-operating grace, hath been unhappily introduced and used to evil purposes. *Augustine* has, to be sure, used it; but he has used it qualified with a suitable definition, that *God by co-operation perfects what he begins by operation;* and that it is the same grace, though by its different mode of operation, it has obtained a different name. Hence it follows that he does not suppose the work to be divided between God and us, as though each had his mutually concurrent part to perform; but that the whole is the effect of multiplied grace. To the same effect is what he elsewhere says, that *many gifts of God precede the good will of man;* among which is this of which we treat. Whence it is clear he leaves nothing

which the will may arrogate to itself: which Paul also hath explicitly declared; for when he has said, *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do*, he immediately subjoins, *of his own good pleasure;* hereby indicating that the whole is from his free benignity.

And now with respect to the second mentioned error which is wont to be entertained, that after we have given way to the first motions of grace, our endeavours co-operate with what follows; I answer: That if they suppose, so soon as we are subdued by the power of God to the obedience of the truth, we of our own accord go on, and are submissive to the subsequent operations of grace; I have nothing to object. For it is most certain, that where the grace of God reigns, there is such a willing obedience. But I ask, whence is this, but that the spirit of God, always consistent with itself, cherishes and confirms unto constant perseverance, this desire to obey which it first produced? But if they suppose that man may assume of himself to be a co-worker with the grace of God, they most pestilently err from the truth. CALV. INST. B. II. CHAP. III.

THE foregoing and former *extracts* from Calvin have been inserted, not because the Editor thinks they exhibit the doctrines of the Gospel on those points, but that the reader might see what were the real sentiments of a man so famous in his day, unadulterated by the glosses, additions or retrenchments of his more modern followers. From these *extracts* may be seen what are the distinguishing tenets of *Calvinism*, as aimed to be taught by Calvin himself; which manifestly are, that man is completely a *machine* in the hands of God: That he can do nothing, not even so much as to co-operate with the grace of God: That whatever is good in him, is the entire work of God. In one respect he appears to differ from, or rather to come short of his followers at the present day: He has not plunged into the abyss of metaphysical disquisition in support of his scheme, by attempting to explain the abstract nature of *liberty* and *necessity;* but manifestly takes for granted, that the will was originally free to choose either good or evil (what is now denied by most *Calvinistic Divines*); but that by the fall, man lost that liberty, and can will only evil; and that God interposes with one and another, according to his own good pleasure; converts their wills, plants good desires, and after they are converted, actually works in them whatever good is wrought: So that not only the beginning, but the whole progress of the *Christian life* is to be entirely ascribed to him. If these positions are true, *unconditional election* and *reprobation* follow of course. As it is not proposed to enter the lists of controversy by attempting to confute these sentiments, suffice it only to observe, that they carry the consequences of the fall and the power of God's grace, to an extent which does not seem to be warranted by the tenor of scripture; nor reconcileable with the nature of *free-agency;* without which man ceases to be an accountable creature. The truth appears to have been, that the *Romish doctrine* of supererogation, or that men can do more than enough to merit salvation, operating on such an ardent mind as Calvin's, drove him into the opposite extreme, leaving the

truth in the midway; and to be expressed in few words, as follows: That man, by the fall, lost the image of God, and consequently the power of doing any thing acceptable to his will. But the promise of the Mediator intervened, which in effect immediately removed this utter inability, and put it in the power of every one to co-operate with the grace and mercy of God, and by that assistance obtain salvation. The language of Christian doctrine thus stated is, use all diligence to make *your calling and election sure*, since God works in you, and for you, *of his own good pleasure*. Further than this it does not seem necessary or useful to enquire. On the whole, having thus shewn from the best authority, the author himself, what *Calvinism* was in its origin, the reader is left with these few remarks to settle his own opinion.

To the Editor of the CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

THINKING that it would be advantageous and agreeable to the readers of the *Churchman's Magazine*, to have a short exposition of the Articles of the Church, I have sent you an abridgement of the Exposition lately given by Dr. Prettyman, the present excellent and worthy Bishop of Lincoln.

AMICUS.

ARTICLE I.

OF FAITH IN THE HOLY TRINITY.

"THERE is but one Living and True God; Everlasting, without Body, Parts, or Passions; of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible; and in the Unity of this Godhead there be Three Persons of one Substance, Power, and Eternity—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

This first article asserts the being and attributes of God, which are the foundation of all religion; and it further declares that the Godhead consists of three persons; which, though it appears to have made a part of the original revelation to mankind, was so far forgotten or obscured, that it may be considered as one of the characteristic doctrines of the Gospel.

The universal consent of mankind has ever been admitted as a strong argument in favour of the existence of a God. We learn from the history of former times, and from the observation of modern travellers, that in every country, and at every period, some idea of a superior being, and some species of divine worship, have prevailed. But though all civilized nations have concurred in the belief of one or more Gods, there has been an infinite diversity in the modes of divine worship; and the errors and absurdities with which all religions, except only those of Moses and of Christ, have abounded, fully evince the weakness of the human intellect when unassisted by Revelation. Some few individuals in the different ages of the world, have indeed rejected all belief in the existence of a God; but we may generally trace the rejection of a Deity to the source of pride or of profligacy.

But a more direct proof of the being of a God may be derived from the universe itself. We are not only conscious of our own existence, but we also know that there exists a great variety of other things, both material and spiritual. It is equally inconceivable that these things should have existed from all eternity, in their present state, or that they should have fallen into this state by chance; and consequently as there was a time when they did not exist, and as it was impossible for them to produce themselves, it follows that there was some exterior agent or creator, to whom the world owed its beginning and form; that agent or creator we call God. And since it is absurd to suppose that there are two Supreme Governors of the world, we are obliged to conclude that God is one. The Supreme Being, however, has not left this important truth to the deductions of human reason only, but has confirmed and established it by Revelation. The unity of God is expressly declared in many passages of scripture: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,* Deut. vi. 4. *Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him.* Deut. iv. 35. We therefore cannot but agree to the first assertion of this article, in opposition to the sinful presumption of Atheists, and the false belief of many deities of the heathen, that there is one, and but one, living and true God. He is the fountain and origin of life to all the animated parts of the creation; he is the true God, as distinguished from the vain Gods of the Gentiles. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God.* John, xvii. 3.

The article next states, that God is everlasting: that is, that he has existed from all past eternity, and will continue to exist to all future eternity. God is, in several passages of scripture, styled eternal and everlasting: *The eternal God is thy refuge.* Deut. xxxiii. 27. *Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God fainteth not, neither is weary.* Isaiah, xl. 28.

To suppose that God is circumscribed by body, consists of material parts, or is liable to passions, would be so utterly inconsistent with our ideas of infinite perfection, with our notion of a being who is equaly present every where, and who is free from every possible defect, that we must, without hesitation, pronounce that God is without body, parts, or passions. *God is a spirit.* John, iv. 24. *And a spirit hath not flesh and bones.* Luke, xxiv. 39. *God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent.* Numb. xxiii. 19. When, therefore, the scriptures speak of the face, eyes, ears, and hands of God, or of his grief, jealousy, anger and other emotions of the mind, we are to consider that such language is only accommodated to the understandings of men; and that those properties and qualities do in fact by no means belong to the Supreme Being. We can form no conception of the agency of a pure spiritual substance, and therefore, in speaking of God, we are under the necessity of using terms derived from ourselves, and which we cannot but know to be in reality inapplicable to him. God having created all things out of nothing, and given to them their various and respective powers, and being able to change, annihilate, and dispose of

every thing in the universe, in any manner which he pleases; it follows that the power of God is infinite. "In thy hand, O God, is there not power, and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?" 2 Chron. xx. 6. "The Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it: His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Isa. xiv. 27. But though with the holy patriarch we confess that "God can do every thing," Job xlii. 2, we must remember that Omnipotence itself does not extend to contradictions or impossibilities; "God cannot lie," Heb. vi. 18, inasmuch as that would be contrary to his perfect nature; nor can he recal past events, which is manifestly impossible. When, therefore, we say that the power of God is infinite, we mean that God is able to perform all things, which do not in themselves imply contradiction or impossibility.

The wisdom of God is inferred from the general construction and government of the world, in which an attentive observer cannot but see evident marks of design, and in which all things are admirably adapted to their respective ends and purposes. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom thou hast made them all!" We cannot form an idea of wisdom superior to that which is thus displayed; nor can we conceive how the wisdom, or any other attribute of the Deity, should be circumscribed by any boundary or limit; and therefore we conclude with the royal psalmist, that "the wisdom of God is infinite," Ps. cxlvii. 5. The infinite wisdom of God may also be considered as including the knowledge of all events, past, present, and future, and of the thoughts, motives, and intentions of all his creatures. This knowledge, without restriction or exception, seems necessarily to belong to the Creator of the universe, from whom every power, property and relation is derived. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world"—Acts xv. 18. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?"—Ps. xciv. 9, 10. By infinite goodness is meant a disposition to communicate every possible degree of happiness to all created beings, of which their nature is capable. That this attribute belongs to God is evident from his general government of the world, and particularly from his dealings with mankind. It hath pleased God to place men in a state of probation, and to endue them with free agency, which is essential to responsibility; he has furnished them with the means of attaining every degree of happiness, consistent with the character of free and accountable beings; he has given them laws as rules of their conduct; he has proposed the most powerful and animating motives to obedience; and he has promised his assistance to those who sincerely endeavour to perform his will. Since then every thing which God has made is good; since he has provided for the preservation of all things, for their proper continuance and well being; since he has bestowed many noble endowments, and a great variety of comforts and blessings upon his rational creatures in this world; and since he has voluntarily, and upon easy conditions, offered them everlasting happiness in a future life, to which no human merit could have the remotest claim, surely we may pro-

nounce that the goodness of God is infinite, boundless as his universal works, and endless as the ages of eternity. The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. Ps. cxlv. 9." "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Ps. cxxxvi. 1.

Upon these grounds we believe that God is of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.

As the world could not have existed from eternity, or have caused its own existence, it must have derived its being from God; and that God was the maker of all things, both visible and invisible, is repeatedly asserted in scripture: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth," Exodus, xxxi. 17.—"In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is," Exodus, xx. 11. God, having created all things, continues to preserve them in a state suitable to the purposes for which they were designed, and by his superintending Providence, he constantly governs the universe which he created. Nothing can happen without the direction or permission of that Being who is the source of all power; he appointed and supports the general course of nature; and he interrupts it by his particular interposition, whenever it seems good to his infinite wisdom: *God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.* Acts, xvii. 25. *Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host: the earth, and all things that are therein; the sea, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all.* Neh. ix. 6. Thus God is not only the maker, but also the preserver of all things, both visible and invisible.

We now come to the latter part of this article, in which the gospel doctrine of the Trinity, or of three persons in the Divine Essence, is asserted. The first passage which I shall adduce from the New Testament in proof of this important doctrine of the Trinity, is the charge and commission which our Saviour gave to his Apostles, to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Mat. xxviii. 19. The gospel is every where in scripture represented as a covenant or conditional offer of eternal salvation from God to man, and baptism was the appointed ordinance by which men were to be admitted into that covenant, by which that offer was made and accepted. This covenant being to be made with God himself, the ordinance must of course be performed in his name; but Christ directed that it should be performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Since Baptism is to be performed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they must all three be persons; and since no superiority or difference whatever is mentioned in this solemn form of baptism, we conclude that these three persons are all of one substance, power and eternity.

The second passage to be produced in support of the doctrine now under consideration, is the doxology at the conclusion of St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you." The manner in which Christ and the Holy Ghost are

here mentioned, implies that they are persons, for none but persons can confer grace or fellowship; and these three great blessings of grace, love, and fellowship, being respectively prayed for by the inspired Apostle, from Jesus Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost, without any intimation of disparity, we conclude that these three persons are equal and divine. This solemn benediction may therefore be considered as another proof of the trinity, since it acknowledges the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost.

The third and last passages which I shall quote upon this subject, is the following salutation or benediction in the beginning of the Revelation of St. John: "Grace and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and Jesus Christ." Here the Father is described by a figure of speech taken from his attribute of eternity, and the seven spirits is a mysterious expression for the Holy Ghost, used upon this occasion either because the salutation is addressed to seven churches, every one of which had partaken of the spirit, or because seven was a sacred number among the Jews, denoting both variety and perfection, and in this case alluding to the various gifts, administrations, and operations of the Holy Ghost. Since grace and peace are prayed for from these three persons jointly and without discrimination, we infer an equality in their power to dispense those blessings; and we farther conclude that these three persons together constitute the Supreme Being, who is alone the object, and is alone the giver of every good, and every perfect gift.

It may be right to remark that the seven spirits cannot mean angels, since prayers are never in scripture addressed to angels, nor are blessings ever pronounced in their name.

It is unnecessary to quote any of the numerous passages in which the Father is singly called God, as some of them must be recollected by every one, and the divinity of the Father is not called in question by any sect of Christians, and those passages, which prove the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost separately, will be more properly considered under the second and fifth articles. In the mean time we may observe, that if it shall appear, as I trust it will, from scripture, that Christ is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, it will follow, since we are assured that there is but one God, that the three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by a mysterious union, constitute the one God, or as this article expresses it, that there is a trinity in unity; "and in the unity of this godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

But while we contend that the doctrine of the Trinity in unity is founded in scripture, and supported by the authority of the early Christians, we must acknowledge that it is not given to man to understand in what manner the three persons are united, or how, separately and jointly, they are God. We know not the essence of our own minds, nor the precise distinction of its several faculties; and why then should we hope to comprehend the personal characters which exist in the godhead? "If I tell you earthly things, and you under-

stand them not, how shall ye understand if I tell you heavenly things?" John, iii. 12. "We cannot by searching find out God." Job, xi. 7. "Behold God is great and we know him not." Job, xxxvi. 26. "Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for us; it is high; we cannot attain unto it." Psalm, cxxxix. 6.

The following extract from one of *Tertullian's* apologies, or vindications of the primitive Christians, contains many things concerning their manners and customs, useful to be known. This *Tertullian* lived and wrote not far from the year 200 after Christ, and was among the most learned and able advocates for Christianity, in his day.

AN EXTRACT FROM TERTULLIAN's APOLOGY.

CHAP. XXXIX.

CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE OF CHRISTIANS; THEIR EMPLOYMENTS, AND MANNER OF LIVING.

HAVING vindicated our sect from the calumnies of rebellion, &c. I come now to lay before you the Christian way and fashion of living.

We Christians then are a corporation or society of men most strictly united by the same religion, by the same rites of worship, and animated with one and the same hope; when we come to the public service of God, we come in as formidable a body as if we were to storm heaven by force of prayer, and such a force is a most grateful violence to God. When this holy army of supplicants is met and disposed in godly array, we all send up our prayers for the life of the emperors, for their ministers, for magistrates, for the good of the state, for the peace of the empire, and for retarding the final doom.

We meet together likewise for the reading of holy scriptures, and we take such lessons out of them as we judge suit best with the condition of the times, to confirm our faith either by forewarning us what we are to expect, or by bringing to our minds the predictions already fulfilled. And certainly our spiritual life is wonderfully nourished with reading the holy scriptures, our hopes thereby are erected, and our trust fixed and settled upon God. However, besides the reading, we continually preach and press the duties of the gospel with all the power and argument we are able; for it is in these assemblies, that we exhort, reprove and pass the divine censure or sentence of excommunication; for the judgments in this place are delivered with all solemnity, and after the maturest deliberation imaginable, as being delivered by men who know they are pronouncing God's sentence, and act with the same caution as if God stood visibly among them; and the censures here pronounced are looked upon as an anticipation of the judgment to come, and the sinner precondemned by God, who has sinned to such a degree as to be shut out by his ministers from the fellowship of the faithful, the communion of prayers and sacraments, and the rest of that sacred commerce.

The presidents or bishops among us, are men of the most venerable age and piety, raised to this honour not by the powers of money,

but the brightness of their lives; for nothing sacred is to be had for money. That kind of treasury we have, is not filled with any dishonorable sum, as the price of a purchased religion; every one puts a little to the public stock, commonly once a month, or when he pleases, and only upon condition that he is both willing and able; for there is no compulsion upon any: All here is a free-will offering; and all these collections are deposited in a common bank for charitable uses, not for the support of merry meetings, for drinking and gluttony, but for feeding the poor and burying the dead, and providing for girls and boys who have neither parents nor provisions left to support them; for relieving old people worn out in the service of the saints, or those who have suffered by shipwreck, or are condemned to the mines, or islands, or prisons, only for the faith of Christ; these may be said to live upon their profession, for while they suffer for professing the name of Christ, they are fed with the collections of his Church.

But strange! that such lovely expressions of Christian charity cannot pass with some men without a censure; for look (say they) how these Christians seem to love each other, when in their hearts they hate each other to death? How forward are they to stake their lives for one another, when inwardly they could cut one anothers' throats? But the true reason of this defamation, upon the account of styling ourselves brethren, I take to be this, because the name of brother is found, with these men, to be only a gilded expression of a counterfeit friendship. But you need not wonder at this loving title among Christians, when we own even you yourselves for brethren by the right of one common nature; although, indeed you have cancelled this relation, and by being inhuman brethren have forfeited the title of men; but by what diviner ties are we Christians, brethren! We who acknowledge but one and the same God, as our universal Father; who have all drank of one and the same holy Spirit, and who are all delivered as it were from one common womb of ignorance, and called out of darkness into his marvellous light! But it may be we cannot pass for real brothers with you, because you want a tragedy about the bloody feuds of the Christian fraternity; or because our brotherly love continues even to the division of our estates, which is a test few brotherhoods will bear, and which commonly divides the dearest unions among you.

But we Christians look upon ourselves as one body, informed as it were by one soul; and being thus incorporated by love, we can never dispute what we are to bestow upon our own members. Accordingly among us, all things are in common, excepting wives: in this alone we reject communion, and this is the only thing you enjoy in common; for you not only make no conscience in violating the wife of your friend, but with amazing patience and gratitude, lend him your own! This doctrine I suppose came from the school of the Grecian Socrates or the Roman Cato, those wisest of Sages, who accommodated their friends with their own wives, wives which they espoused for the sake of children of their own begetting, as I imagine, and not of other men!

Whether the wives are thus prostituted with their own consent, in

truth I cannot tell, but I see no great reason why they should be much concerned about that chastity, which their husbands think not worth keeping. O never to be forgotten example of Athenian wisdom!

But is it any great wonder that such charitable brethren as enjoy all things in common, should have such frequent love-feasts? For this it is, you slander us, and reflect upon our little frugal suppers, not only as infamously wicked, but as scandalously excessive. Diogenes, for ought I know, might have us Christians in his eye, when he said, that the Magarensians feast as if they were never to eat more, and build as if they were to live for ever; but every one sees a straw in another's eye, sooner than a beam in his own; or else you must be sensible of your own beastliness in this case: for the very air in the streets is soured with the belches of the people coming from their feasts in their several wards; the Salii cannot sup without the advance of a loan, and upon the feast of tythes to Hercules, the entertainment is so very costly that you are forced to have a book-keeper on purpose for expences. At Athens, likewise, when the Apaturia, or feasts in honour of Bacchus for a serviceable piece of treachery he did, are to be celebrated, there is a proclamation for all choice cooks to come in, and assist at the banquet; and when the kitchen of Serapis smoaks, what baskets of provisions come tumbling in from every quarter! But my business at present is to justify the Christian supper: and the nature of this supper you may understand by its name; for it is the Greek word for love. We Christians think we can never be too expensive, because we think all is gain that is laid out in doing good; when, therefore, we are at the charge of an entertainment, it is to refresh the bowels of the needy; you gorge those parasites among you, who glory in selling their liberty to satiate their appetites; but we feed the hungry, because we know God takes a peculiar delight in seeing us do it. If therefore, we feast only with such excellent designs, I leave you, from hence, to guess at the rest of our discipline in matters of pure religion; nothing earthly, nothing unclean has ever admittance here; our souls ascend in prayer to God, before we sit down to meat: we eat only what suffices nature, and drink no more than what is strictly becoming chaste and regular persons. We sup as servants who know we must wake in the night to the service of our master, and discourse as those who remember that they are in the hearing of God. When supper is ended, and we have washed our hands, and the candles are lighted up, every one is invited to sing praises to God, either such as he collects from the holy scriptures, or such as are of his own composing: and by this you may judge of the measures of drinking at a Christian feast. And as we began, so we conclude all in prayer, and depart not like a parcel of heated bullies, for scouring the streets, and killing and ravishing the next we meet, but with the same temperance and modesty we came, as men who have not so properly been a drinking, as imbibing religion. This assembly of Christians, therefore, is deservedly ranked among unlawful ones, if it holds any resemblance with them; and I will not say a word against condemning it, if any man will make good any one article against it which is charged upon other factions. Did we ever come together to the ruin of any per-

son? We are the same in our assemblies as at home, and as harmless in a body, as apart; in neither capacity injuring nor afflicting any person whatever. When therefore, so many honest and good, pious and chaste people are met together, and regulated with so much discipline and order; such a meeting is not to be called factious, but is as orderly an assembly as any of your courts.

ADVICE TO A STUDENT,

CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF A CLERGYMAN.

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS. THE DOCTRINES OF RELIGION.

WITH respect to the doctrines of religion, you will think it your duty "to keep back from your congregation nothing that is "profitable to them; nor shun to declare unto them all the counsel "of God:" that is, you will endeavour to lay before them, in the course of your ministry, the whole Christian faith; as well those articles of it which are common to all religion, but are more clearly discovered by the gospel, as those which are peculiar to that dispensation. Some of each kind it will be proper to set forth in appropriate discourses; others, as a part of some general topic; others again incidentally, as occasions may arise. Your own good sense and consideration will instruct you, which of them are most frequently to be handled; which are to be more briefly stated; and which more copiously explained. Thus, the attributes of God, being the vital substance of religion, must pervade every discourse, whether doctrinal or preceptive: they must occur continually as a ground of obligation, and as an incentive to practice: in these views they cannot be too often recalled to the remembrance and meditation of your hearers. But subtle disquisitions concerning them are not likely to edify any congregation. The divine omniscience, for example, is a powerful argument, often inculcated in scripture, for purity of heart and life. But few of your hearers will be able to follow you, and still fewer to any useful purpose, if you pursue the operation of this attribute, through all its objects and effects, into the question of predestination, or the consistency of divine prescience with human liberty. The trinity of persons may be considered as a revealed attribute of the Deity. The divine essence, which is the subject of this doctrine, being incomprehensible, the doctrine cannot be explained: it can only be stated as a truth demonstrable from divers passages of the scriptures, and interwoven with the whole procedure of the evangelical dispensation: for the same reason (by the way) it cannot be called into question on any other ground, than on the written word from which alone we have received it. The assistance of the holy spirit is another doctrine which we owe entirely to revelation; although, now that it is discovered, it appears philosophically credible and probable: for why the supreme intellect may not act immediately upon created spirits, as effectively as it does upon matter; or as it does upon the same spirits by the intervention of matter; or as the same spirits act, by the intervention of matter, upon each other; no metaphysician can tell: nor can any one reasonably deny the

probability, that, as God has in his goodness been pleased to guide us ordinarily in one of these manners, (namely, by information and impulse communicated to the mind through the medium of the senses;) he may not, on fit subjects and occasions deteminable only by himself, direct us in another, (namely by immediate communication to the mind itself:) nor can it be shewn that this gift of grace any way derogates from the endowments of nature, or may not influence us in perfect consistency with the free operation both of the understanding and the will. But these rational subsidiary arguments in support of a truth revealed, you may not readily make intelligible or useful to an ordinary congregation: you will rather think it sufficient to lay before them the doctrine with the scriptural proofs; and then lead them to practical conclusions; you will exhort them "to work out their own salvation" with a mixture of confidence and anxiety, because God worketh in them both "to will and to do*;" encouraged by the assurance of his gracious assistance, but "trembling" at the thought of not co-operating with it, and so receiving it in vain.

These few examples may serve to shew you the manner, in which I conceive you may be an edifying preacher of sound doctrine; stating it clearly; proving it from the scriptures; confirming it from reason, if the case permit; and drawing from it practical inferences; but referring all curious disputations concerning it to their proper place and occasion. It is the duty of the whole Christian Church to preserve unimpared "the faith which was once delivered to the saints†," and recorded for the use of all succeeding generations.—It will be your duty, as a minister therein, to declare it to the people committed to your charge; and to provide to the extent of your situation and ability, that it may be handed down in perfection and purity from age to age, nothing being "added thereto, nor aught diminished from it‡." The several articles of this scriptural faith are to form the substance, and colour the language of your discourses: and though some of them, on account of their high order and practical tendency, demand more frequent handling and application than others, you are to suffer none to be forgotten.

But the three great points of Christian doctrine, in which the whole is virtually comprehended, are for that reason, subjects which you can never treat too frequently or too copiously; the *means*, the *conditions*, and the *consequences*, of our final acceptance with God. The progressive communication of these saving truths seems to have been the object of all divine revelation; and therefore to propound and recommend them, appears to be the proper scope of all human and ministerial instruction. For this gracious purpose, "God did at sundry times and in divers manners speak" in former ages to mankind, by sensible manifestations of his presence, by the ministry of angels, and by the embassy of prophets; and he "hath in these last days spoken unto them by his Son.§" For this, the Apostles in obedience to the last injunction of their divine master, "went into all the world and preached the Gospel to every creature:‖" they be-

* Philip. ii. 12. 13. † Jude 3. ‡ Deut. iv. 2.
§ Heb. i. 1. ‖ Mark xvi. 15.

came voluntary exiles (most of them) from their country, and exposed themselves to persecution, imprisonment, and death. For the same end, their immediate successors made it the object of their studies and lives to propagate the faith of Christ, and to guard it against misconception or perversion. With the same view in succeeding ages, the piety of princes and people conspired in building places of worship, and founding seminaries of religion. "The gates of hell," the devices of Satan or misguided men, or the natural mortality of its members, "have not prevailed against the Church of Christ*." A succession of ministers has been continued for near eighteen centuries: some indeed, for many ages past, labouring under the oppression of Mahometan tyranny; "their candlestick removed out of its place†," and their light obscured. Others, protected by Christian governments, respected and listened to by their congregations, and leading them as we trust, with successful diligence, in the ways of faith, virtue, and happiness.

You will, therefore, as I just now intimated, be continualy impressing upon the minds of your congregation the *nature* and *tenor* of the Gospel covenant; explaining to them what God hath in his mercy *done* for us through Jesus Christ, what his holiness and justice *require* of us, and what, if we conform to this requisition, his goodness hath *prepared* for us. You will speak of the obedience due from every creature to the Creator: which is paid implicitly and uniformly by the natural or necessary agent, and "is the stay of the whole" material "world‡:" which the rational agent has the high privilege of presenting as an elective, voluntary, offering; and of deriving from the divine bounty, through his own free choice, the perfection and happiness of his being. You will call to their recollection (a fact to which every man's conscience bears testimony) the imperfect obedience of all mankind; the consequent necessity which they feel, of mercy; and the only channel and *mediation* through which God hath been pleased to offer it. You will state, explain, and inculcate the *conditions* upon which we may receive this covenanted mercy: you will display the free gift or *reward* proposed to us, if we accept the conditions; the loss and *punishment*, if we reject them.

FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A LITURGY.

THAT forms of prayer in public worship are far preferable to extempore effusions, may be clearly shewn to every candid and unprejudiced mind.

The advantages of a liturgy, says Archdeacon Paley, are these:

1. That it prevents absurd, extravagant, or impious addresses to God, which, in an order of men so numerous as the sacerdotal, the folly and enthusiasm of many must always be in danger of producing, where the conduct of the public worship is entrusted without restraint or assistance, to the discretion and abilities of the officiating minister.

* Matth. xvi. 18. † Rev. ii. 5.

‡ Hooker Eccl. Pol. i. 2, 3, &c.

2. That it prevents the confusion of extemporary prayer, in which the congregation being ignorant of each petition before they hear it, and having little or no time to join in it, after they have heard it, are confounded between their attention to the minister and their own devotion. The devotion of the hearer is necessarily suspended until a petition be concluded; and before he can assent to it, or properly adopt it, that is, before he can address the same request to God for himself, his attention is called off to keep pace with what succeeds. Add to this, that the mind of the hearer is held in continual expectation, and detained from its proper business by the very novelty with which it is gratified. A congregation may be pleased and affected with the prayers and devotion of their minister, without joining in them, in like manner as an audience oftentimes are with the representation of devotion upon the stage, who nevertheless come away without being conscious of having exercised any act of devotion themselves. Joint prayer, which amongst all denominations of Christians is the declared design of "coming together," is prayer in which they all join; and not that which one alone in the congregation conceives and delivers, and of which the rest are merely *hearers*. This objection seems fundamental, and holds even where the minister's office is discharged with every possible advantage and accomplishment. The labouring recollection and embarrassed or tumultuous delivery of many extemporary speakers, form an additional objection to this mode of public worship; for these imperfections are very general, and give great pain to the serious part of a congregation, as well as afford a profane diversion to the levity of the other.

POETRY.

FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

A FRAGMENT—(CONTINUED.)

A DISMAL blank of time now follow'd sad;
A waste of untold years dragg'd slowly on.
Extinct the light of science, arts, and all
The rich embellishments of polish'd life,
Beneath whose fostering hand, no more the hills
And vallies smile, with yellow harvests deck'd;
The sea-beat strand no more with cities crown'd,
Where commerce spreads the frequent whitening sail,
And swarming thousands crowd the busy street,
Green rolling *Rhine*, and *Danube's* ancient flood
Deep trenching, downward seek the distant main,
By devious lonely tracks to fame unknown.
Old *Eridanus*, wrathful tosts his foam
From rock to rock, bellowing to the wild waste:
And Tyber scarce can grope his uncouth way,
Crawling beneath huge desolation strew'd
Along his once gay margin chequer'd, o'er
With green enamell'd meads, and hallow'd groves,
And *Villas*, dazzling to the solar beams;
And towns, and cities climbing up the slope,

Or spreading, turret-crown'd, across the plain.
Lo! where ascends in awful majesty,
Resistful to the hand of wasting time.
The *Pantheon's** rotund dome, dispeopled quite,
Frowning defiance to the northern blast,
That through his ample circuit whirls, and roars,
And drives the wither'd rubbish eddying forth.
Here points the trophy'd pillar to the sky,
And 'cross the barren heath its dun shade throws:
There shapeless ruins† huge bestrew the ground;
Unsightly, mocking vain ambitions toil;
Thy pride, *Vespasian*, humbling to the dust.
Amid the once throng'd *forum* silence reigns;
All blank and gloomy round, the sun-beams play
In quivering haze, from bursting walls and towers
Moss-grown, with tufting olives crown'd above.
The besom of destruction sweeps thy streets,
O city fam'd! O wonder of the world!
And o'er thy mouldering ramparts swift decay
Triumphant rides, and revels in thy fall;
Portentous, threatening to recorded time,
And all the ways of art-embellish'd man
Oblivious shade, from memory quite foreclos'd.
But mark his power and wisdom infinite,
Whose spirit erst upon the great deep mov'd,
Brooding the mass of unessential things,
When now the all-creating word he spake,
Let there be light, light with the *fiat* beam'd:
Who sits on Heaven's arch enthron'd, and views
Beneath his feet, the earth-born race of man,
As atoms of the dust that float, uprais'd,
The high etherial void: Within whose ken
The nations rise, and evanescent sink,
As bubbles borne along the torrent stream
Of time, down flowing to the ocean's bourn
Of vast eternity, to him disclos'd:
Who to his chosen seer,‡ on Ulai's banks
Foreshew'd the wondrous scene of providence,
In mystic vision veil'd, of horned beasts
Up-rising from the watery waste, o'erblown
And striven by the tempest-brewing winds;
Dreadful in wrath, gnashing their iron teeth;
In might resistless, trampling to the earth
Opposing foes, till stay'd by Heaven's high will.
Then sawest thou, *O man belov'd* of God,
Far down the tract of time, by Gabriel taught;
The hurry'd years pass'd flitting by, and short
The date of empires to thy quicken'd sight,
By days prophetic told: and lo! self-mov'd,
Shar'd from the mountain's side, the stone foretold
By prophets eld, the clay-mixt image smites,
By Babel's mighty monarch nightly seen,
Vain-glorious dreaming on his proud estate,
Enthron'd and lording o'er the conquer'd world.
The baseless vision crumbles, hurl'd away,
As chaff dispers'd before autumnal winds.
Instead, behold, a mountain rises fair,

* A Temple so called at Rome. † The Amphitheatre of Vespasian. ‡ Daniel.

On sure foundations laid, Mount Zion call'd
In sacred dialect, that spreads and spreads,
'Till all of mortal birth shall sit beneath
Its shade. Mysterious, but instructive scene,
Portraying fit ambitious greatness rear'd
On human woe, with blood of millions stain'd;
When the Almighty ruler of the skies,
In vengeance due, made bare his holy arm,
And with his unresisted might brought down
The lofty looks of *Rome*, weaning to sit
Unrival'd queen till time should be no more.
O blind to fate, and God's unchang'd decree!
For now the ages roll'd, in order set,
To usher in the kingdom of his Son;
A kingdom boundless as the circling light,
And ending only with the world's last date:
Before whose sceptre righteousness and peace
In bright patrole shall march, coursing around
This habitable sphere. Already see,
From Calvary's mount, the sacred lore gone forth,
Wide o'er the lands by million tongues confess'd,
And seal'd by blood of holy martyrs slain.
See from the sky the radiant cross descend*
Triumphant wav'd o'er potentates and thrones,
With high imperial ensigns interwove;
And fierce barbarian chiefs, by *Rome's* wide sway
Unaw'd; unreverend of her hoary years;
By arts untam'd, bow down their stubborn necks;
Their fierceness curb, before his humble name;
To whom all earth and heaven shall bend the knee,
When forth he comes, enthron'd, riding sublime,
Salvation's chariot down the nether sky.
Sacred to him, unviolated now
The solemn temple's awe-inspiring dome;
The peaceful cell, by no rude foot profan'd,
Inviting stands, and opes its friendly doors,
Where heavenly contemplation dwells serene;
And holy Anchorets their morning songs
Breathe soft and slow; or when the evening throws
Around his mantling shades, loud *Vespers* chant,
Hymning devout their Saviour, and their God.
Here long repos'd from *Gothic* hands secure,
The works of deathless fame, and science found
A safe retreat, shorn of her brightest beams:
Religion's hallow'd train, with guardian care,
Here watch'd assiduous round her unquench'd fires,
That dormant lay 'neath smoldering embers pent;
Till re-enkindl'd by his quickening breath,
Who first from darkness call'd etherial light,
To cheer the embrian world.

* Alluding to *Constantine's* vision of the cross.

Mr. Editor,

IF the accompanying lines shall be found worthy of a place in your Magazine, I shall be much gratified by their insertion. They are the production of Mr. Peter Downes, who served as midshipman on board the Leander, which ship formed a part of the line of battle, in Lord Nelson's fleet, on the first of August, 1798, in Aboukir bay. Mr. D. lost his life on the twelfth of the same month, in the action with the French 80 gun ship Guilliaume Tell, to which the Leander struck.

TO A FRIEND.

"WHAT nothing earthly gives, or can destroy
"The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy
"Is virtue's prize;" and these are thine my friend,
Whose thoughts, words, actions, all to virtue tend:
Secured by these, pursue the opening road
To bliss eternal, and the seat of God.
Religion guards thee, and fair hope shall guide
Thy labouring vessel 'gainst the adverse tide.
Tho' dark misfortune cloud in storms the day,
Still hope can light thee with her cheerful ray.
Tho' blind opinion lurk a dangerous shoal,
Faith shines, the beacon of thy wished-for goal.
Tho' custom threatens from his fatal rock,
Thy helmsman, reason, shuns or soothes the shock.
If gaily wafted by some favouring gale,
Should balmy Zephyrs fill thy silken sail;
And power and honour roll o'er golden ore
To bear thy frigate to soft pleasure's shore;
Should health improve each poignant sweet of life,
And love endear thee to a beauteous wife;
Think but in these thy happiness begun,
Tho' more than e'er by earthly blessings won.
Seek bliss in heaven, content supplies it here,
Hope always sees it, virtue brings it near.

P. D.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

[NO. IV.]

LETTER FROM DR. SEABURY TO THE CLERGY OF CONNECTICUT.

LONDON, July 15, 1783.

Gentlemen,

IN prosecution of the business committed to me by you, I arrived in this city on the 7th inst. Unfortunately the Archbishop of York had left this city a fortnight before, so that I was deprived of his advice and patronage. I waited on the Bishop of London and met with a cordial reception from him. He heartily approved of the scheme, and wished success to it, and declared his readiness to concur with the two Archbishops in carrying it into execution: but I soon found he was not disposed to take the lead in the matter. He mentioned the State Oaths in the Ordination offices, as impediments, but supposed that the King's dispensation would be a sufficient warrant for the Archbishops to proceed upon. But upon conversing with His Grace, of Canterbury, I found his opinion rather

different from the Bishop of London. He received me politely, approved of the measure, saw the necessity of it, and would do all he could to carry it into execution. But he must proceed openly and with candour. His Majesty's dispensation he feared would not be sufficient to justify the omission of oaths imposed by act of parliament. He would consult the other Bishops; he would advise with those persons on whose judgment he thought he could depend. He was glad to hear the opinion of the Bishop of London, and wished to know the sentiments of the Archbishop of York. He foresaw great difficulties, but hoped there were none of them insurmountable. I purpose to set out for York in a few days to consult the Archbishop, and will do every thing in my power to carry this matter into a happy issue; but it will require a great deal of time, and patience, and attention. I endeavoured to remove those difficulties that the Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned. And I am not without hopes that they will all be got over. My greatest fear arises from the matter becoming public, as it now must, and that the Dissenters here will prevail on your government to apply against it: this I think would effectually crush it, at least as far as it relates to Connecticut. You will therefore do well to attend to this circumstance yourselves, and get such of your friends as you can trust, to find out, should any such intelligence come from hence. In that case, I think it would be best to avow your design, and try what strength you can muster in the Assembly to support it. But in this matter your own judgment will be a much better guide to you than any opinion of mine.

I will again write to you on my return from York, and shall then be able to tell you more precisely what is like to be the success of this business.

I am, reverend gentlemen,
with the greatest respect and esteem,
your most obliged humble servant,
SAMUEL SEABURY.

[No. V.]

LETTER FROM DR. SEABURY TO THE CLERGY OF CONNECTICUT.

LONDON, AUGUST 10, 1783.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

IN the letter which I wrote to you after my interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury, I informed you of the objections made, and difficulties mentioned by him, with regard to the businiess on which I came to England. I also informed you of my intention to take a journey to York, that I might have the full benefit of his Grace of York's advice and influence. This journey I have accomplished, and I fear to very little purpose. His Grace is now carrying on a correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject; what the issue will be is not certain; but I think, unless matters can be put on a different footing, the business will not succeed. Both the Archbishops are convinced of the necessity of supplying the States of America with Bishops, if it be intend-

ed to preserve the Episcopal Church there; and they even seem sensible of the justice of the present application, but they are exceedingly embarrassed by the following difficulties:

1. That it would be sending a Bishop to Connecticut, which they have no right to do without the consent of the State.
2. That the Bishop would not be received in Connecticut.
3. That there would be no adequate support for him.
4. That the oaths in the ordination office cannot be got over, because the King's dispensation would not be sufficient to justify the omission of those oaths. At least there must be the concurrence of the King's Council to the omission; and that the Council would not give their concurrence without the permission of the State of Connecticut to the Bishop's residing among them.

All that I could say, had no effect, and I had a fair opportunity of saying all that I wished to say.

It now remains to be considered what method shall be taken to obtain the wished for Episcopate.

The matter here, will become public. It will soon get to Connecticut. Had you not, gentlemen, better make immediate application to the state for permission to have a Bishop to reside there? Should you not succeed, you loose nothing, as I am pretty confident you will not succeed here, without such consent. Should there be any thing personal with regard to me, let it not retard the matter: I will most readily give up my pretensions to any person who shall be agreeable to you, and less exceptionable to the State.

You can make the attempt with all the strength you can muster among the Laity: and at the same time I would advise that some persons be sent to try the State of Vermont on this subject. In the mean time I will try to prepare and get things in a proper train here. I think I shall be able to get at the Duke of Portland and Lord North, on the occasion. And should you succeed in either instance, I think all difficulty would be at an end.

I am, worthy gentlemen,
with the greatest respect and esteem,
your much obliged and very humble
brother and servant,
SAMUEL SEABURY.

[No. VI.]

LETTER FROM DR. SEABURY TO REV. MR. LEAMING.

LONDON, SEPT. 3, 1783—No. 91, WARDOUR-STREET.

MY DEAR SIR,

THOUGH I have so lately written to you, as well as to the Clergy of Connecticut, explaining the situation of the business on which I came to England; yet I must more fully open my mind to you, and you are to be the judge, whether any, and how much of this letter is to be shewed to any one else.

With regard to my success, I not only think it doubtful, but that the probability is against it. Nobody here will risk any thing for the sake of the Church, or for the sake of continuing Episcopal ordination in America. Unless therefore it can be made a ministerial

affair, none of the Bishops will proceed in it for fear of clamour; and indeed the ground on which they at present stand, seems to me so uncertain, that I believe they are obliged to take great care with regard to any step they take out of the common road. They are apprehensive that my consecration would be looked on in the light of *sending* a Bishop to Connecticut, and that the State of Connecticut would resist it, and that they should be censured as medlers in matters that do not concern them. This is the great reason why I wish that the State of Connecticut should be applyed to for their consent. Without it, I think nothing will be done. If they refuse, the whole matter is at an end: If they consent that a Bishop should reside among them, the grand obstacle will be removed. You see the necessity of making the attempt, and of making it with vigour. One reason, indeed, why I wished the attempt to be made in Connecticut, relates to myself. I cannot continue here long: necessity will oblige me to leave it in March or April, at furthest. If this business fails, I must try to get some provision made for myself: and indeed the State of Connecticut may consent that a Bishop should reside among them, though they might not consent that I should be the man.— In that case, the sooner I shall know it the better: and should that be the case, I beg that no Clergyman in Connecticut, will hesitate a moment on my account. The point is, to get the Episcopal authority into that country; and he shall have every assistance in my power.

Something should also be said about the means of support for a Bishop in that country. The Bishops here are apprehensive that the character will sink into contempt, unless there be some competent and permanent fund for its support. Please let your opinion of what ought to be said on that subject be communicated by the first opportunity, i. e. provided you think any thing can be done in Connecticut.

Dr. Chandler's appointment to Nova-Scotia, will, I believe succeed. And possibly he may go thither this autumn, or at least early in the spring. But his success will do no good in the States of America. His hands will be as much tied as the Bishops in England; and I think he will run no risks to communicate the Episcopal powers. There is, therefore, every thing depending on the success of the application to the State of Connecticut. It must be made quickly, lest the dissenters here should interpose and prevent it; and it should be made with the united efforts of clergy and laity, that its weight may be the greater; and its issue you must make me acquainted with as soon as you can. Please to send me one or two more testimonials from the copy which Dr. Inglis has. Mr. Moore and Mr. Odell will assist in copying and getting them signed; and I may want them.

By Capt. Cowper I expect to be able to acquaint you with the result of the interview of the two Archbishops in my business. In the mean time, may God direct and prosper all the endeavours of his faithful servants, to the establishment of his true religion in the western world. Adieu, friend of my heart! May I see thee again in peace! May I again enjoy the pleasure of thy converse, and with thee be instrumental in promoting the welfare of Christ's kingdom.

Adieu! says thy ever affectionate, S. SEABURY.

Let application be made also to the State of Vermont, lest that to Connecticut should fail.

[NO. VII.]

LETTER FROM THE CLERGY OF CONNECTICUT TO DR. SEABURY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

SINCE the receipt of your letters, addressed to the Clergy in Connecticut, we have by your letter to the Rev. Mr. Leaming, a more explicit information of the difficulties suggested by the Bishops in England, and which appear to operate upon their minds, against complying with our petition, and to their giving you Episcopal consecration.

The Clergy were immediately made acquainted with what you had written, and shortly after met at Wallingford. In convention it was voted,—that the leading members of both Houses of Assembly which was then sitting at New-Haven, should be conferred with, so far as the proposed difficulties had reference to the civil government. We the subscribers were appointed a committee of convention for the above purpose, and, as a conventional answer to your letters, communicate to you the result of that conference, together with our opinion, and what we could do, to obviate the objections made by the Bishops. Mr. Leaming and Mr. Hubbard conversed freely and fully with a number of principal members of both Houses of Assembly, and collected their sentiments on the subject.—They met with a degree of attention and candour beyond our expectation; and in respect of the need, the propriety, or the prudence of an application to government for the admission of a Bishop into the state, their opinions appeared fully to coincide with our own.

Your right, they said, is unquestionable. You therefore have our full concurrence for your enjoyment of what you judge essential to your Church. Was an act of Assembly expedient to your complete enjoyment of your own ecclesiastical constitution, we would freely give our vote for such an act. We have passed a law which embraces your Church, wherein are comprehended all the legal rights and powers, intended by our constitution to be given to any denomination of Christians. In that act is included all that you want. Let a Bishop come, by that act, he will stand upon the same ground that the rest of the Clergy do, or the Church at large. It was remarked that there were some, who would oppose and would labour to excite opposition among the people, who if unalarmed by any jealousies, will probably remain quiet. For which reason it would be impolicy both in us, and them, for the Assembly to meddle at all with the business. The introduction of a Bishop on the present footing, without any thing more, in their opinion would be the easiest and securest way in which it could be done, and we might be sure of his protection. This they thought must be enough to satisfy the Bishops, and all concerned in the affair in England. We are further authorized to say, that the legislature of the state would be so far from taking umbrage, that the more liberal part, will consider the Bishops in this transaction as maintaining entire consistency of principle and character, and by so doing merit their commendation.

The act above alluded to, you will receive inclosed in a letter from Mr. Leaming, attested by the clerk of the lower House of Assembly. It is not yet published. The clerk was so obliging as to copy it from the journals of the House. You were mentioned as the gentleman we had pitched upon. The secretary of the state, from personal knowledge, and others, said things honourable and benevolent towards you. Now if the opinion of the Governor and other members of the council, explicitly given in entire agreement with the most respectable members among the representatives, who must be admitted to be competent judges of their own civil polity, is reasonably sufficient to remove all scruples about the concurrence of the legislature, we cannot imagine that objection will any longer have a place in the minds of the Archbishops. We here understand, as we suppose, the part which the government established among us, means to take in respect of religion in general, and the protection it will afford to the different denominations of Christians under which the subjects of it are classed: and the lowest construction, which is all we expect, must amount to a permission that the Episcopal Church enjoy all the requisites of her polity, and have a Bishop to reside among them. We feel ourselves at some loss for a reply to the objection which relates to the limits and establishment of a diocese, because the government here is not Episcopal; and because we do not conceive a civil or legal limitation and establishment of a diocese, essentially attached to the doctrine of Episcopacy, or the existence of a Bishop in the Church. The Presbyters who elect the Bishop, and the congregations to which they minister, may naturally direct his active superintendance, and prescribe the acknowledged boundaries of his diocese.

Under existing circumstances, and utterly unable to judge with any certainty what, in the course of divine providence, may be the future condition of the Church in this country, we can contemplate no other support for a Bishop, than what is to be derived from voluntary contracts, and subscriptions and contributions, directed by the good will and zeal of the members of a Church who are taught, and do believe that a Bishop is the chief minister in the kingdom of Christ on earth. Other engagements, it is not in our power to enter into, than our best endeavours to obtain what our people can do, and we trust will continue to do, in proportion to the increase of their ability, of which we flatter ourselves with some favourable prospect. A Bishop in Connecticut must in some degree, be of the primitive style. With patience and a share of primitive zeal, he must rest for support on the Church which he serves, as head in her ministrations, unornamented with temporal dignity, and without the props of secular power.

An Episcopate of this plain and simple character, amid the doubts and uncertainties which at present in a measure pervade every thing, we hope may pass unenvied, and its sacred functions be performed unobstructed. Should what we have now written be thought sufficient to do away the objections which have been advanced, as a bar to your consecration: yet if you cannot find yourself disposed to come to us under these circumstances, painful necessity must compel us

to wait patiently, until divine providence shall open a door propitious to our wants. But in the mean time, with the help of God, we will not remit in our endeavours to persevere, and as far as in us lies, cherish this remnant of his Church.

We herewith transmit to you two copies of our letter, and two of the general testimonial, attested by the Secretary. Continuing fervently desirous of your success; and with our best wishes for your personal health and prosperity; we are in behalf of convention,

Your affectionate Brethren,

JEREMIAH LEAMING,
ABRAHAM JARVIS,
BELA HUBBARD.

[*No date, being the first draught.*]

SELECT THOUGHTS.

REFLECTIONS ON MAN.

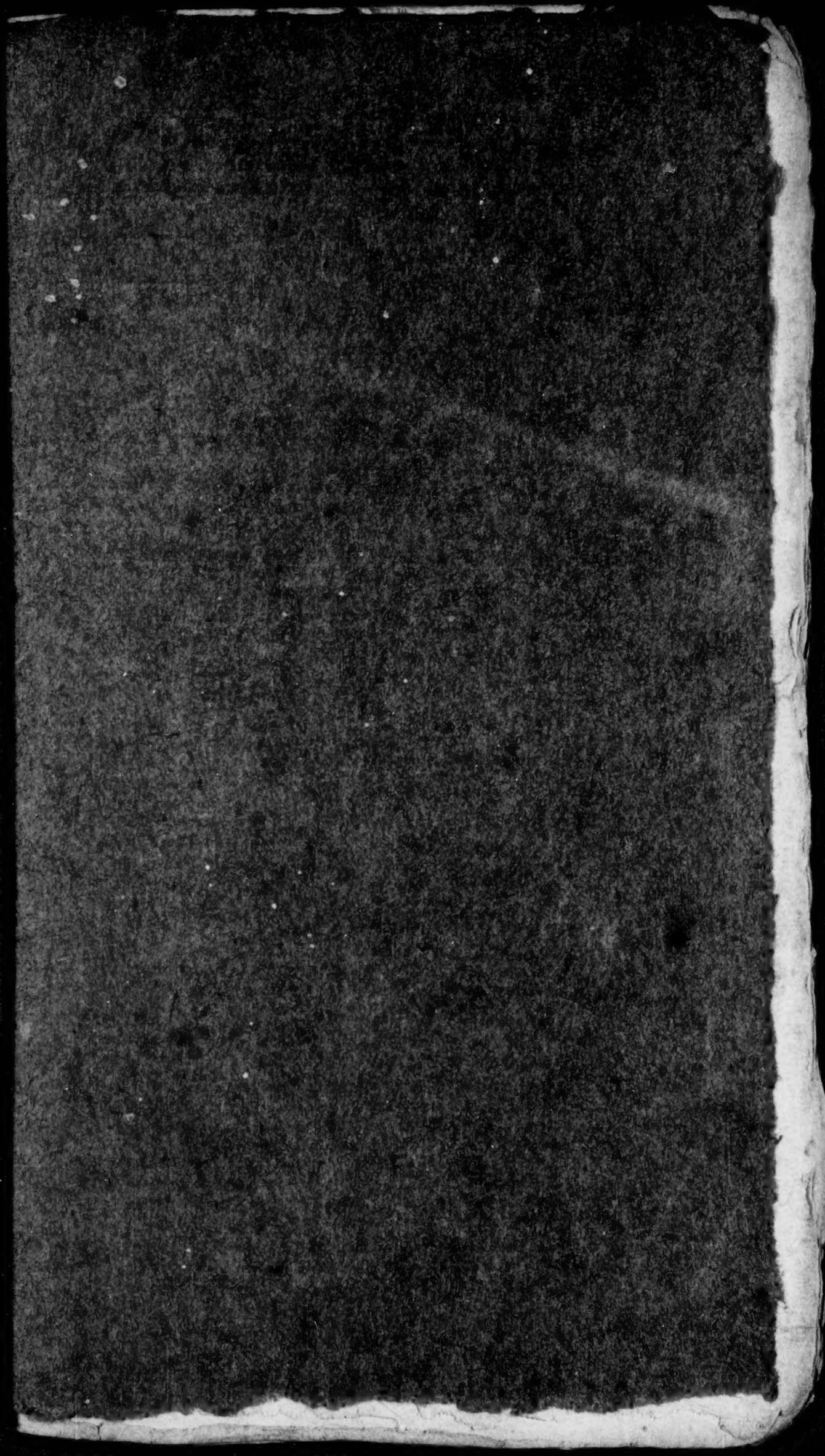
LET all remember that the generations of men are like the waves of the sea; in quick succession they follow each other to the court of death. Another, and another, quick succeeds and presses on the shore, and ebbs, and dies to give place to the following wave. Thus we are wafted forward: now buoyed, perhaps by hope, fanned by the breezes of prosperity; now sinking in despair; shivering in the tempest of fortune, overwhelmed in the billows of sorrow. Sometimes, when the least expected, the storms gather and the winds arise, and life's pale bubble bursts. Be cautioned then, nor trust to cloudless skies, to placid seas, nor sleeping winds. Forget not there are hidden rocks; guard too against the sudden blast; be faith your pilot: you will then safely be guided to the haven of eternal bliss.

There you may bathe your happy soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across your peaceful breast.

GOOD EXAMPLE.

BISHOP Hall, who was as humble and courteous as he was learned and devout, was accustomed to say, "That he would suffer a thousand wrongs rather than be guilty of doing one; or endeavour to right himself by contending; for he had always observed, that to contend with one's superior, is foolish; with one's equal, is dubious; and with one's inferior, mean and sordid.

"AMICUS" will receive the best testimony of our thanks, from the use we have made of his *Communications*, and we hope will be encouraged to persevere.



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